

Acton Community Housing Corporation

Nancy Tavernier, Chairman

TOWN OF ACTON

Acton Town Hall

472 Main Street

Acton, Massachusetts, 01720

Telephone (978) 263-9611

achc@acton-ma.gov

TO: Planning Board
FROM: Nancy Tavernier, Chair, Acton Community Housing Corporation
SUBJECT: Proposed development 456 Mass Ave. and affordable housing
DATE: March 13, 2015
Cc: Board of Selectmen, Steve Ledoux, Town Manager

The Acton Community Housing Corporation is aware that a request for a Definitive Subdivision Plan (Residential Compound) is being proposed for the property at 456 Mass. Ave. for the second time. We would like to comment on the proposal in regard to affordable housing goals in the Town.

Last summer, ACHC was approached by two different developers who wanted to construct a small scale affordable housing development (40B) on that property but neither was able to complete the deal or make the numbers work. We were very interested and supportive of both proposals. They were completely consistent with the Town's Comprehensive Permit Policy. This location is a prime location for affordable housing, it abuts two existing 40B's (Davis Place and Blanchard Place) and is three properties away from a third 40B, Lalli Terrace. What makes this an ideal location is its proximity to the services at Kelley's Corner and the schools, and it is transit oriented with nearby access to the Rail Shuttle. Had we known the ultimate selling price was going to be so much less than what the owner was asking last summer, ACHC would have aggressively pursued the property itself for affordable housing. Be that as it may, the current proposal is not for affordable housing and that is the Town's loss.

We want to praise the Town Planning Staff, Roland Bartl and Kristen Guichard, for raising the affordable housing issue in their memos to the Board and putting this request in context with the Town's Zoning Bylaw, its Comprehensive Permit Policy, and the Acton 2020 Comprehensive Community Plan. It takes great courage for people to stand up in support of affordable housing but Kristen and Roland have, *they get it*. They have been proactively involved in advocating for affordable housing. Their front-line interaction with developers has resulted in many extra affordable housing units over the years.

The Town is currently involved in a Housing Production Planning effort to set goals and strategies for the next 5 years. The Planning Board and the Board of Selectmen will need to approve the final plan submitted sometime this summer. We hope you will attend the next forum where affordable housing strategies will be selected. We were disappointed that no one from the Planning Board attended the December forum. Please put the new one on your calendar, Thursday, May 14, 7:00PM in Room 204 of Town Hall.

ACHC thanks Roland and Kristen.